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### Cyanobacteria

- **Cyanobacteria**, or blue-green algae, appear naturally, in most cases without toxicity.
- Intense proliferation is linked to both human and animal intoxication cases.
- The production of toxic metabolites is the main cause → cyanotoxins.
- The production of cyanobacteria, as well as their cyanotoxins, is almost **impossible to predict** precisely.
- Annual cost of harmful blooms> \$ 800M in
- the US



Reporting contaminated water bodies.



#### Widespread algal blooms on Lake Erie







- The growth of blue-green algae is a function of heat and nutrients.
- Agricultural wastes and climate change aggravate the situation.

#### **Drinking water treatment plant**



#### **Problematics**

- Cyanotoxins are considered as an emerging threat in aquatic environments but also in water supply systems.
- The development of future analytical methods for cyanotoxins faces many challenges.
- The diversity of toxins and congeners, with different physicochemical proprieties makes it difficult, to date, the ability to detect and quantify the majority of cyanobacterial toxins.
  - various degradation conditions
  - different conditions of storage
  - different extraction / analysis conditions
  - distribution and availability of standards
  - Analytical costs

## Determination of β-*N*-methylamino-L-alanine

- The non-proteinogenic amino acid β-Nmethylamino-L-alanine (BMAA) is an excitotoxic neurotoxin.
- BMAA is possibly related to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis/Parkinson's disease complex (ALS/PDC).
- More than **95 % of toxic cyanobacterial** can produce BMAA, suggesting its presence in aquatic environments.
- No regulation and no monitoring are in place in North America.



Cycas circinalis



Cycas circinalis seeds 6

Roy-Lachapelle, A. *et al.*, Analytical Bioanalytical Chemistry, 2015. **407**(18): p. 5487-5501. Cox P.A., *et al.*, P Natl Acad Sci USA, 2005. **102**(27):9734-9734.

Several analytical methods have been published for the detection of BMAA, but **few consensuses** have been made on the reported concentrations.

#### HPLC-FD

- Derivatization with 6-ACQ
- Overestimation → derivatization of other amino acids and small molecules

#### HPLC-MS & MS/MS

Derivatization with 6-ACQ for improved selectivity

#### HILIC-MS/MS

- Simplified method
- High dependency on the chromatographic separation

Few methods which include BMAA to other cyanotoxins in a single analysis

### **Objectives**

#### The aim of this work is to:

develop an analytical method for the detection of BMAA and two isomers, DAB and AEG, using dansyl chloride (DNS) derivatization.

H<sub>2</sub>N

 NH2
 NH2
 H2N

 BMAA
 DAB
 AEG

 include three alkaloid cyanotoxins: anatoxin-a,
 cylindrospermopsin and saxitoxin.

ANA-a CYN OH H2N O STX

- use UHPLC-HESI-HRMS in a fragmentation mode to determine the fragmentation patterns and then suggest their **fragment structures** using Mass Frontier<sup>TM</sup> 7.0 software.
- apply the method to real field-collected cyanobacterial bloom water samples.

O=S=O

 $H_{2}$ 

DNS

#### Workflow



### **Fragment identification**

## Mass Frontier<sup>™</sup> 7.0 software

🖫 HighChem Mass Frontier 7.0		– ø ×
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k 🚔 📓 m Report Creator 🙀 5.3 €	170.0964 172.1121 178.0169 233.0743 234.0583 235.0662 236.0740 237.0818 247.0900 251.0849 253.1005 261.0692 263.0 · III 170.0964	^
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#### Fragments

Experimental precursor masses (m/z)

- <u>BMAA, DAB and AEG</u>: 585.1836
- <u>ANA-a</u>: 399.1737
- <u>CYN</u>: 649.1744
- <u>SXT</u>: 533.1925
- <u>DAB-D</u><sub>3</sub>: 588.2024

Average mass accuracy < 2 ppm

#### Due to BMAA and AEG coelution:

Unique fragments are used and their signal ratios are monitored to ensure no false positives are present.



Roy-Lachapelle, A. et al., Analytical Bioanalytical Chemistry, 2015. 407(18): p. 5487-5501.

## **Results from bloom water samples**

#### Cyanotoxins detection in lake samples (µg L<sup>-1</sup>) with relative standard deviation (RSD-%)

No. Sample	Location	BMAA	DAB	AEG	ANA-a	CYN	SXT
1	Lanaudière	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
2	Montérégie	ND	0.01 (7)	0.08 (8)	0.1 (7)	ND	ND
3	Montérégie	0.2 (9)	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
4	Montérégie	ND	ND	0.05 (10)	ND	ND	ND
5	Estrie	ND	ND	ND	0.08 (9)	ND	ND
6	Estrie	0.03 (8)	0.04 (8)	0.05 (9)	0.02 (7)	ND	ND
7	Saguenay	ND	0.009 (10)	0.06 (8)	ND	ND	ND
8	Saguenay	0.3 (10)	0.008 (11)	0.009 (11)	ND	0.2 (9)	ND
9	Abitibi- Témiscamingue	ND	ND	ND	0.2 (6)	ND	ND
10	Abitibi- Témiscamingue	0.01 (8)	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
11	Abitibi- Témiscamingue	ND	0.03 (9)	ND	0.03 (8)	0.1 (11)	ND
12	Montérégie	ND	ND	0.01 (5)	0.01 (6)	ND	ND

**SPE recoveries**: 86 to 103 % **Signal recoveries from matrix effects**: 75 to 96 %

Method detection limits (MDL): 0.008 to 0.01  $\mu$ g L<sup>-1</sup>  $\rightarrow$  an order of magnitude lower than published methods

## **Determination of anatoxin-a (ANA-a)**



J Vet Diagn Invest 20:89-92 (2008)

#### Diagnosis of anatoxin-a poisoning in dogs from North America

Birgit Puschner,<sup>1</sup> Brent Hoff, Elizabeth R. Tor

Abstract. Anatoxin-a, a toxin produced by several genera of blue-green algae, is considered a potent neurotoxin. Ingestion of water contaminated with the toxin results in acute neurological signs and often death. This report describes fatal cases of anatoxin-a ingestion in 6 dogs, with confirmation of anatoxin-a exposure by liquid chromatography/tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS/MS). In 1 outbreak, 3 dogs developed seizures and died within an hour after swimming in a river in California, while the other outbreak involved 3 dogs that died within 1 hour after swimming in a pond in Ontario. Anatoxin-a poisoning is rarely reported in dogs as a cause of acute neurological signs and death. However, increased occurrences of blue-green algae blooms in North America make this neurotoxin an important consideration in the diagnosis of sudden death associated with environmental water exposure. This brief communication reports on the isolation and detection of anatoxin-a from environmental water sources and the stomach contents of North America dogs dying of acute neurotoxicosis. This demonstrates the first documented cases of anatoxin-a poisoning in dogs in North America and the importance of LC-MS/MS/MS in identifying neurotoxins responsible for sudden death in cases of suspected blue-green algae toxicosis; especially those cases showing no gross or histological lesions.

- Neurotoxin; Mimics the effect of the neurotransmitter, acetylcholine, resulting in respiratory complications or paralysis.
- Many cases of animal mortality (wild and domestic) caused by ANA-a.
- ANA-a is stable under acidic conditions; in presence of UV light or alkalinity → nontoxic transformation products (dihydroanatoxin-a, epoxyanatoxin-a).

Roy-Lachapelle, A. *et al.*, Talanta, 2015. **132**; p. 836-844. Puschner, B. *et al.*, J Vet Diagn Invest, 2008. **20**; p. 89-92. Faassen, L. *et al.*, Toxicon, 2012. **60**; p. 378-384.

## **Analytical challenges**

- Spectroscopic detection methods are **avoided** due to the instability of ANA-a in contact with UV light.
- Most of the developed methods are based on LC-MS/MS.
- Phenylalanine, an essential amino acid, is an isobaric interference of ANA-a using MS/MS detection.
- Some similarities in terms on chromatographic separation, may lead to misindification.



## Anatoxin-a analysis using LDTD-APCI-HRMS

- LDTD: Laser Diode Thermal Desorption (Phytronix Technologies)
- instant information of possible contamination
- simple, robust, lower costs, fast (< 10 sec / sample).
- A minimal resolution of **4,500 FWHM** is needed to resolve the mass signals of anatoxin-a and phenylalanine.
- Using PRM (Parallel Reaction monitoring) mode, a resolving power of 17,500 FWHM (*m/z* 200) with the Q Exactive

Roy-Lachapelle, A. *et al.*, Talanta, 2015. **132**; p. 836-844. Lemoine, P., Roy-Lachapelle, A., *et al.* Toxicon, 2013, **61**; p. 165–174. http://ldtd.phytronix.com/ http://www.thermoscientific.com/



LDTD-APCI



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**Q** Exactive



#### **ANA-a and phenylalanine resolution**

#### Mass error < 1 ppm

Second most abundant isotopes

## Analysis of ANA-a using the LDTD-APCI-HRMS

#### Internal calibration by standard addition method (ANA-a/PHE-D5)





Method detection limit (MDL): 0.2 μg L<sup>-1</sup> Method quantification limit (MQL): 0.6 μg L<sup>-1</sup> Regulations: 3.7 μg L<sup>-1</sup> (Québec) and 6.0 μg L<sup>-1</sup> (New Zealand).

#### Anatoxin-a detection in lake samples

Sample	Location	FS mode detection (µg L <sup>-1</sup> )	PRM mode detection (µg L <sup>-1</sup> )	LC-MS/MS* detection (µg L <sup>-1</sup> )
1	Estrie	2.5 (11)	ND	0.1
2	Estrie	1.1 (9)	ND	0.02
3	Saguenay	ND	ND	0.01
4	Saguenay	ND	ND	0.01
5	Abitibi-Témiscamingue	1.9 (10)	0.21 (7)	0.2
6	Abitibi-Témiscamingue	ND	ND	0.01
7	Abitibi-Témiscamingue	1.6 (12)	ND	0.02
8	Montérégie	ND	ND	0.01

\* Quantified by the Centre d'Expertise en Analyse Environnementale du Québec (CEAEQ), the analytical services of the Ministère du Développement Durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les Changements Climatiques (MDDELCC).

Matrix effects (FS): 98 to 172 %

Matrix effects (PRM): 98 to 102 %

## Determination of total microcystins in fish

## **Microcystin structures (MC)**





- More than **100 different microcystins have been identified, but** only a dozen certified standards are available.
- Regulations in drinking and recreative waters: 1 μg L<sup>-1</sup> (WHO)
   1.5 μg L<sup>-1</sup> (Canada).
- In aquatic environments, microcystins can bioaccumulate, microcystins may accumulate in food chains and thus be subjected to biomagnification.
- This bioaccumulation is due to the formation of irreversible links in the tissues of aquatic species, but is still largely unknown.



## **Objectives**

#### Workflow

Lemieux oxidation to extract the MMPB moiety (2-methyl-3-methoxy-4 phenylbutyric acid), common to all microcystins congeners.



## **Results for fish tissue**

## Comparison of total microcystins found in fish tissue samples using two analytical approaches.

Samples	Lakes	Fish species	Type of tissue	Total MCs via MMPB (µg kg⁻¹)ª (CV - %)	Total MCs with standards (μg kg⁻¹) <sup>ь</sup>	Digestion/oxidation: 70-75%
1	Lac Vert	Rainbow smelt	Viscera	11.9 (7)	ND	
2	Lac Vert	White sucker	Whole	8.7 (8)	ND	SPE recuperation : 91-98%
3	Lac Vert	White sucker	Whole	13.2 (6)	2.0	•
4	Lac Vert	White sucker	Whole	9.5 (10)	ND	Matrix offacts: 00 03%
6	Lac Vert	Brook trout	Muscle	5.0 (10)	ND	
7	Lac Vert	Brook trout	Muscle	4.5 (9)	ND	
9	Lac Roxton	Yellow perch	Muscle	4.0 (10)	ND	LDM: 2.7 μg kg <sup>-1</sup>
11	Lac Roxton	Yellow perch	Muscle	3.1 (11)	ND	<b>LQM:</b> 8.2 µa ka <sup>-1</sup>
14	Lac Roxton	Yellow perch	Muscle	5.2 (9)	ND	1 1 1 3 3
17	Lac Noir	Yellow perch	Muscle	4.5 (7)	ND	
18	Lac Noir	Yellow perch	Muscle	7.3 (11)	ND	
20	Lac Noir	Yellow perch	Muscle	2.7 (12)	ND	
22	Lac Noir	Walleye	Muscle	4.4 (8)	ND	Concentrations between
24	Lac Noir	Walleye	Muscle	2.9 (10)	ND	2.9 and 13.2 ug kg <sup>-1</sup>
27	Lac Noir	Walleye	Muscle	3.4 (9)	ND	
33	Lac Noir	Brown bullhead	Muscle	3.8 (9)	ND	
35	Lac Noir	Brown bullhead	Muscle	5.2 (8)	ND	
38	Lac Noir	Lake whitefish	Muscle	7.1 (8)	ND	
40	Lac Noir	Lake whitefish	Muscle	6.2 (9)	ND	
41	Lac Noir	Lake whitefish	Muscle	5.9 (7)	ND	
44	Lac Noir	Lake whitefish	Muscle	7.3 (10)	ND	
45	Lac Noir	Lake whitefish	Muscle	4.5 (11)	ND	
46	Lac Noir	Lake whitefish	Muscle	3.0 (9)	ND	
49	Lac Noir	Yellow perch	Muscle	3.7 (11)	ND	

<sup>a</sup>Total microcystins determined via MMPB using LDTD-APCI-HRMS.

<sup>b</sup>Microcystins determined via the summation of all microcystins for which standards allowed detection and quantification (i.e., MC-LA, MC-LR, MC-RR, and MC-YR) using LC-MS/MS.

Roy-Lachapelle A. et al., J. Agric. Food Chem. 2015, 63; p. 7440-7449.

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A. Roy-Lachapelle et al. / Analytica Chimica Acta 820 (2014) 76-83

#### Table 3

Comparison of total microcystins analysis of lakes samples using LDTD-APCI-MS/MS and LC-MS/MS.

No. Sample	Location	Date	Total MC via MMPB (µg L <sup>-1</sup> ) <sup>a</sup> (RSD - %)	Total MC with standards $(\mu g L^{-1})^b$	MC isomer without standards (µg/L) <sup>c</sup>	Total MC (µgL <sup>-1</sup> ) <sup>d</sup>	Percentage of MC with standards (%) <sup>e</sup>
1	Estrie	20130614	425 (9)	70	340 (RR) <sup>f</sup>	410	16
2	Estrie	20130614	1.0 (5)	0.15	0.5 (RR <sup>f</sup>	0.65	15
3	Saguenay	20130620	5.4(7)	1.6	3.3 (YR <sup>f</sup>	4.9	30
4	Saguenay	20130620	4.7 (8)	1.8	2.5 (YR <sup>f</sup>	4.3	38
5	Abitibi-Temiscamingue	20130624	ND	ND	ND	ND	-
6	Laurentides	20130731	37.4(7)	35.4	ND	35.4	95
7	Abitibi-Temiscamingue	20130731	0.9 (8)	ND	ND	ND	-
8	Abitibi-Temiscamingue	20130731	2.7 (7)	0.59	ND	0.59	22
9	Monteregie	20130801	ND	0.1	ND	0.1	-

ND – Not detected.

<sup>a</sup> Total microcystins determined via MMPB using LDTD-APCI-MS/MS.

<sup>b</sup> Microcystins determined via the summation of all microcystins for which standards allowed detection and quantification (i.e., <u>HilR, HtyR, LA, LF, LR, LR (D-Asp3), LW, LY, RR, RR (D-Asp3), WR, YR</u>) using LC–MS/MS.

<sup>c</sup> Microcystin isomer for which identification and concentration could not be certified due to the absence of appropriate standards using LC-MS/MS. Although their characteristics are slightly different from the available standard, there is a very high probability that these are isomers of LC-RR and LC-YR.

<sup>d</sup> Total microcystins determined via the summation of all microcystins for which standards allowed detection and quantification and also for the suspected isomer tentatively identified using LC-MS/MS.

<sup>e</sup> Percentage is calculated as: (MC isomer with standards/total MC via MMPB) × 100.

<sup>f</sup> Suspected isomer of the specified congener.

# Determination of cyanotoxins in cyanobacterial dietary supplement samples

Cyanotoxins daily intake from CB dietary supplements samples ( $\mu$ g) according to recommended maximum daily intake. Values in brackets represent the detected cyanotoxins as percentages of the WHO adult TDI guideline of 0.04  $\mu$ g kg<sup>-1</sup> body weight for microcystins.

Samples	MCs tot	ANA-a	DH-ANA-a	E-ANA-a	CYN	STX	BMAA
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	7.2	ND	ND	ND
Spirilina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	0.25 (10)	ND	0.41	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	2.5 (104)	ND	ND	8.1	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	0.6 (25)	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Spirulina	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
A. Flos-aquae	16.4 (683)	ND	2.2	1.8	ND	ND	0.08
A. Flos-aquae	4.5 (188)	ND	ND	0.28	ND	ND	ND
A. Flos-aquae	3.3 (138)	0.35 (6)	5.8	ND	ND	ND	0.44
A. Flos-aquae	0.8 (33)	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND

#### **Analytical automation**

#### **Online SPE coupled to UHPLC and HRMS**

- Sample extraction automated with the before chromatographic separation.
- Greater analytical capacity.
- Total MCs via MMPB: New method with LOD in water of 0.02  $\mu$ g  $\Sigma$ MCs/L

		MLD (µg L <sup>-1</sup> )	MLQ (µg L⁻¹)
14 cyanotoxins:	CYN	0.005	0.02
	ANA-a	0.01	0.04
Using 1 ml of sample with LC-HRMS	(DAsp³)MC-RR	0.009	0.03
in 7 min	MC-RR	0.007	0.02
	MC-HtyR	0.02	0.05
<ul> <li>HRMS scans: allows to go back on</li> </ul>	MC-HilR	0.009	0.05
the analyzes to identify known	MC-WR	0.01	0.04
microcystins of which we do not have	MC-YR	0.01	0.04
the standard.	MC-LR	0.01	0.04
	(DAsp <sup>3</sup> )MC-LR	0.006	0.02
Inclusion of anatoxin-a transformation	MC-LA	0.006	0.02
products.	MC-LY	0.008	0.03
	MC-LW	0.01	0.03
<ul> <li>Same strategy for BMAA.</li> </ul>	MC-LF	0.01	0.04

#### **Microcystins congeners**

Microcystins		Molecular	Exact Mass	x	z	R	xLogP.
		Formula			_		
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> Dhb <sup>7</sup> ] MC-RR	C47H71N13O12	1009.53452	Arg	Arg	Н	-0.7
MC-RR	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-RR	C48H73N13O12	1023.55016	Arg	Arg	Н	-0.4
	MC-RR	C49H75N13O12	1037.56582	Arg	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	-0.2
	6(Z)-Adda MC-RR	C49H75N13O12	1037.56582	Arg	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	-0.2
	MC-YR	C52H72N10O13	1044.52804	Tyr	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	2.2
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> Dhb <sup>7</sup> ] MC-LR	C47H70N10O12	966.51747	Leu	Arg	Н	1.5
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-LR	C48H72N10O12	980.53312	Leu	Arg	H	2.1
	MC-LR	C49H74N10O12	994.54877	Leu	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	2.3
	6(Z)-Adda MC-LR	C49H74N10O12	994.54877	Leu	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	2.3
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-FR	C51H70N10O12	1014.51747	Phe	Arg	Н	
MC-XR	MC-FR	C52H72N10O12	1028.53312	Phe	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	2.6
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-WR	C53H71N11O12	1053.52837	Trp	Arg	Н	
	MC-WR	C54H73N11O12	1067.54402	Trp	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	2.7
	[Dhb <sup>7</sup> ] MC-HilR	C49H74N10O12	994.54877	Hil	Arg	Н	2.3
	MC-HilR	C50H76N10O12	1008.56442	Hil	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	2.8
	[Dhb <sup>7</sup> ] MC-HtyR	C52H72N10O13	1044.52803	Hty	Arg	Н	2.6
	MC-HtyR	C53H74N10O13	1072.55934	Hty	Arg	CH <sub>3</sub>	
MC-RZ	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-RA	C45H66N10O12	938.48617	Arg	Ala	Н	
	MC-RA	C46H68N10O12	952.50182	Arg	Ala	CH <sub>3</sub>	1?
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-Raba	C46H68N10O12	952.50182	Arg	Aba	Н	
	MC-Raba	C47H70N10O12	966.51747	Arg	Aba	$CH_3$	
	MC-RL	C49H74N10O12	994.54877	Arg	Leu	CH <sub>3</sub>	
	MC-YA	C49H66N7O13	959.46404	Tyr	Ala	CH <sub>3</sub>	3.4
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-LA	C45H65N7O12	895.46912	Leu	Ala	Н	
	MC-LA	C46H67N7O12	909.48477	Leu	Ala	CH <sub>3</sub>	3.5
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-LAba	C46H67N7O12	909.48477	Leu	Aba	Н	
	MC-LAba	C47H69N7O12	925.50042	Leu	Aba	CH <sub>3</sub>	3.7
MC-XA	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-FA	C48H63N7O12	929.45347	Phe	Ala	Н	
	MC-FA	C49H65N7O12	943.46912	Phe	Ala	CH <sub>3</sub>	3.4
	MC-FAba	C50H67N7O12	957.48477	Phe	Aba	CH <sub>3</sub>	
	[Asp <sup>3</sup> ] MC-WA	C50H64N8O12	968.46437	Trp	Ala	Н	
	MC-WA	C51H66N8O12	982.48002	Trp	Ala	CH <sub>3</sub>	3.5
	MC-WAba	C52H68N8O12	996.49567	Trp	Aba	CH <sub>3</sub>	
	MC-LL	C49H73N7O12	951.53172	Leu	Leu	CH <sub>3</sub>	4.8
MC-XL	MC-FL	C52H71N7O12	985.51607	Phe	Leu	CH <sub>3</sub>	
	MC-WL	C54H72N8O12	1024.52697	Trp	Leu	CH <sub>3</sub>	4
	MC-LY	C52H71N7O13	1001.51099	Leu	Tyr	CH <sub>3</sub>	4.7
MC-LZ	MC-LW	C54H72N8O12	1024.52697	Leu	Trp	CH <sub>3</sub>	5.2
	MC-LF	C52H71N7O12	985.51607	Leu	Phe	CH <sub>3</sub>	5.1
	MC-AW	C51H66N8O12	982.48002	Ala	Trp	CH <sub>3</sub>	3.9
MC-XZ	MC-YM	C51H69N7O13S	1019.46741	Tyr	Met	$CH_3$	4.1
	MC-VF	C51H69N7O12	971.50042	Val	Phe	$CH_3$	4.7





Micropeptin 1106, Exact Mass 1105.5808

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And thank you for your attention!



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GenomeCanada

GenomeQuébec

Université de Montréal

Environnement et Changement climatique Canada

Fonds de recherche sur la nature et les technologies Québec 🏘 🕸



Développement durable, Environnement et Lutte contre les changements climatiques

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